# Hornets' Nest part one - The Stuff of Nightmares, by Paul Magrs

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**[Part One]**

MIKE YATES: (narrating) I didn't know it at the time, but on the particular winter's afternoon in question, I was travelling towards one of the strangest episodes in my entire life. And when a man's had the sort of career I have, that isn't a claim he makes lightly. My train was delayed, and the carriage draughty, and I told them so. First Class and I was frozen solid. Quite outrageous. By the time I reached the village there was a chill mist lurking in the air. It was the day after the Winter Solstice. Twenty-Second of December. I remember thinking it strange that there should be insects buzzing in the hedgerows near to the address I'd been asked to report to. Rather late in the year for them, surely? But such vague thoughts were of a secondary nature. I was much more concerned with my reasons for being here. Having travelled into the heart of the English countryside, a strange air of foreboding clung to me, as if I already knew that I was about to encounter a living ghost. As instructed, I presented myself at the cottage, a serviceable, rather picturesque dwelling. Sign on the door called it The Nest. Better than Dunroamin, I suppose, or ... any other such vulgar appellation. I knocked, and almost immediately was met by the surly, rather sour visage of the housekeeper, Mrs Wibbsey.
(Bird singing.)
MRS WIBBSEY: You're late. You said you'd be on time.
MIKE YATES: Yes. Train trouble.
MRS WIBBSEY: I let him know you'd telephoned last night.

MIKE YATES: (narrating) She looked me up and down in the most supercilious manner and led me indoors.
(Ticking of a clock.)
MIKE YATES: (narrating) Inside it was clean but cluttered. Smelled rather of old sherry and burnt toast. Through a doorway I could see a wood fire burning in one of the low ceilinged rooms just off a hallway, whilst nearby an antique clock ticked away, twenty to the dozen.

MRS WIBBSEY: I'll take your things.

MIKE YATES: (narrating) She practically grabbed my coat and bag from me. Watching her retreat down the hall with them, I felt suddenly helpless. At least I had the right place. It was Mrs Wibbsey I'd spoken to on the phone the previous evening.

MIKE YATES: Hello? My name is Yates. Captain Mike Yates, retired. I'm calling about a rather curious advertisement, placed in this month's issue of Country Time.
MRS WIBBSEY: (phone) Oh yes?

MIKE YATES: (narrating) I read the advertisement out to her.

MIKE YATES: Wanted. Retired Army Captain for light household duties and fireside companionship. Must tolerate mild eccentricity and strong scientific advice. Knowledge of giant maggots, super-intelligent spiders and prehistoric monsters a positive boon.
MRS WIBBSEY: (phone) That'll be an example of the master's sense of humour, sir.
MIKE YATES: The Master? Surely you don't mean...?
MRS WIBBSEY: (phone) And you feel yourself qualified for the position, do you, sir?
MIKE YATES: (amused) I'm not about to apply for *any* kind of position at my age. And I left the military quite some time ago. But I must admit, it's piqued my curiosity.
MRS WIBBSEY: (phone) I see.

MIKE YATES: (narrating) The truth was, I felt that the advert had been somehow placed there

in order to gain my attention, and mine alone. Then she went on to give me details of how to get there from London, so there I was the very next day, having transported myself to the altogether frigid back of beyond. Perhaps I was losing my marbles, I thought. She led me into a cosy sitting room. Possibly this whole thing was a kind of chimera, and I was about to embarrass myself chasing shadows. Chasing memories.

(Ticking of clock and roaring fire.)
MRS WIBBSEY: Help yourself to the drinks. He always does.
MIKE YATES: Thank you. Will you join me?
MRS WIBBSEY: I have never touched a drop in my life, sir.

MIKE YATES: (narrating) And with that, she left me to it. I gazed round the room, which contained a pretty extensive collection of books. Never been much of a ready, I must say, and this seemed like a rum bunch of tomes to me.
(Chiming of clock.)
MIKE YATES: (narrating) I helped myself to a soda water, and prepared myself to face whoever it was had drawn me here. And just then, the grandfather clock struck. Thirteen times. In that moment, I knew that I'd been right to follow my intuition and to come here. I had the most curious sense of vertigo, a feeling that once again, my past was about to catch up with me. I had indeed been called, personally. I went to sit down on the overstuffed chintz armchair, and somehow I missed. I felt myself start to topple towards the hardwood floor. Idiot. To have a funny turn in stranger's parlour. I could kick myself. But just as I was about to fall, strong hands reached out for me. They held my weight. Silently, someone had appeared in the room, and had fetched this old duffer up before he could hit the floor.

MIKE YATES: What the?

MIKE YATES: (narrating) And a warm, welcoming, and somehow terribly familiar voice spoke into my ear.

THE DOCTOR: You should take more water with it, Mike.
MIKE YATES: Who?
THE DOCTOR: Yes. Welcome to The Nest, Captain Yates.

MIKE YATES: (narrating) It was the Doctor!

(Tom Baker's opening Doctor Who theme, composed by Ron Grainer.)
ANNOUNCER: (Tom Baker) Doctor Who. Hornets' Nest. The Stuff of Nightmares, by Paul Magrs. Starring Tom Baker and Richard Franklin.

MIKE YATES: I knew it.
THE DOCTOR: Did you?
MIKE YATES: I had an inkling. I mean, that advert and all.
THE DOCTOR: Yes, it's very interesting about that.
MIKE YATES: What are you doing here, hidden away in deepest Sussex? I didn't know you owned property.
THE DOCTOR: There's a lot we don't know about each other, Captain.
MIKE YATES: Er - it's plain Mister these days, Doctor. Has been for quite some time.
THE DOCTOR: Of course. Since the business with the dinosaurs marauding around Westminster, eh?
MIKE YATES: Quite.
THE DOCTOR: Forgive me if I slip into old habits and call you Captain. As for why I'm here in bucolic splendour you can call it a temporary sojourn.
MIKE YATES: But it can't be you.
THE DOCTOR: Oh dear. Are you going to get very mixed up? Have a drink, Mike. Sit yourself down, my dear chap.
MIKE YATES: Time lines. It's the Time lines, isn't it? You've gone and crossed over and back again and looped the flaming loop, haven't you?
THE DOCTOR: Have I?
MIKE YATES: But you ... you look just like you did after I left UNIT. We met once.

THE DOCTOR: Yes. The Brigadier's Christmas party.
MIKE YATES: But then I'd heard that you'd changed, and changed again.
THE DOCTOR: Did I? How annoying for all of us.
MIKE YATES: And here you are, back as you were in the Seventies. And look at me.
THE DOCTOR: As you know, Mike, Time's not linear for me.,
MIKE YATES: I know only too well. Look at you. Any of you can come back at any time, can't you, without a by-your-leave.
THE DOCTOR: I'm afraid so.
(Buzzing from insect.)
THE DOCTOR: I' so glad you've come. You see, I've been in need of a little company.
MIKE YATES: You, Doctor, company? Huh! I thought you were happy wandering about on a whim. It's not like you to sit in one place. What are those damned insects? They shouldn't be around in the middle of Winter. You've got a bit of an infestation problem here, Doctor.
THE DOCTOR: Exactly, Mr Yates.

MIKE YATES: (narrating) I spent the rest of the day feeling rather perplexed. The Doctor showed me around his new home, plagued as it was by the unseasonal insects, whatever they were.
(Barking of a dog.)
MIKE YATES: (narrating) He introduced me to his rather aggressive dog, a big shaggy wolfhound.

THE DOCTOR: Down, Captain, down - down, boy. No, not you, Mike, not you.

MIKE YATES: (narrating) And pointed out various items of interest, including original oak beams, what appeared to be a signed Polaroid photograph of him at the death of Nelson, a large number of moth-eaten stuffed creatures, and even a wretched garden gnome. He seemed to take such a pride in the place. I was shown to a chilly and plain guest room, and told to make myself comfortable in preparation for dinner and the evening's conversation. The Doctor grinned at me from the doorway, and left me sitting there with my bags, feeling very confused. Not that I wasn't delighted to see the old fellow. Meeting him again, oh, it's ridiculous, I know, but he made me feel young again. I felt like I did when we were running about in London after the Master or the Axons. I felt as if we were defending the Earth again, just like back in the old days when the Earth didn't know it needed any such thing. He seemed pleased to see me, too, even though I felt sure there were others he could have called upon. And yet there was something very gloomy about him, a sense that something dreadful and terrifying was about to unfold. I myself set about unfolding my pyjamas and organising my things, and felt rather glad. A nasty-looking stuffed owl sat on my dressing table, fixing me with its gimlet eye the whole time I was dressing for dinner. I threw a towel over its head. That'd fix the brute. The evening passed in a pleasant golden blur of reminiscence and laughter. We roved over old ground, and the Doctor brought me up to date with some of his more recent escapades. Giant rats, killer robots, skulls from the dawn of time, indeed. I never did know whether to believe half his tales or not. All the while, Mrs Wibbsey hovered round us, clanking cutlery and plates in a very bad-natured manner indeed. My namesake, Captain, sat growling under the table, snatching at tidbits the Doctor would absent-mindedly drop every now and then.

(Fire burning in the background.)
THE DOCTOR: You will stay, won't you? Just a few days?
MIKE YATES: Well, I ... Of course, Doctor.
THE DOCTOR: There's something ... something very weird that I...

MIKE YATES: (narrating) It was at that point in the proceedings that a weasel leapt for the Doctor's throat. Really. It had been boggling at him from the sideboard for some moments. Just one of a plethora of dead animals draped around the place. It sprang magnificently across the width of the room...
(Growl of weasel.)
MIKE YATES: (narrating) ... and was at my host's throat in a flash.

(Screech by creature.)

MIKE YATES: Hold still.
THE DOCTOR: Quick, the candelabrum.
MIKE YATES: I've got him.
(Gunshot. Whimper from creature. Thump to the floor.)
MIKE YATES: That's the end of him. Good thing I brought this with me. Would you mind telling me what's going on, Doctor?
THE DOCTOR: A slight overreaction, Mike. You've shot him into smithereens. I can't examine his brain now.
MIKE YATES: His brain?
THE DOCTOR: Yes.

MIKE YATES: (narrating) And off he stomped. And abruptly dinner was over. He was always prone to flying off in terrible petulant moods. I finished my dinner, and noticed Mrs Wibbsey skulking around waiting to clear things away.

(Fire burning in background.)
MRS WIBBSEY: There's no use asking me. This sort of thing happens all the time.
MIKE YATES: Good gracious.
MRS WIBBSEY: Taking my life in my hands, working here.
MIKE YATES: I'll leave you to get on with it. Good night.

MIKE YATES: (narrating) All I got in reply from her was a grunt.

MRS WIBBSEY: Huh!

MIKE YATES: (narrating) Dreadful woman. I went to bed, my mind swirling over the day's curious events. As I lay in the dark, I found myself listening for noises in the cottage. Occasionally I'd hear a door thump, or Captain set up barking. Perhaps the Doctor had taken his badly behaved mutt for a walk. I woke at a few minutes past three o'clock.

MIKE YATES: What? What's that? Hello?

MIKE YATES: (narrating) When my eyes grew used to the gloom, I could make out a hideous mounded shape on my dressing-table glaring at me. Then I remembered the owl, covered with a hand towel. (Shuddering.) I took a deep breath.

(Fluttering of wings.)
MIKE YATES: What the devil? Doctor!

MIKE YATES: (narrating) The damn thing shot through the air and almost had my eyes out. At that very moment the Doctor burst into my room.

THE DOCTOR: What is it?
MIKE YATES: Owl. Quickly!
THE DOCTOR: Let me, let me.

MIKE YATES: (narrating) I sat up in bed like a fool as the Doctor wrestled the thing to the ground. Stark white feathers shot everywhere. The owl's beak and talons shone in the moonlight, and then the Doctor was strong, incredibly strong, pinning the monster to the carpet, and ... My God. He was talking to it. Muttering to it.

THE DOCTOR: Sleep again. You must rest. Sink your thoughts into my thoughts. Calm yourself.

MIKE YATES: (narrating) He put it into a trance. Unbelievable. I watched as he placed the owl carefully back on the dressing-table.

THE DOCTOR: I'm very sorry, Mike, you won't be disturbed again.
MIKE YATES: Disturbed? Doctor, I demand to know what's going on here.
THE DOCTOR: I'll explain - tomorrow.

MIKE YATES: I want to hear about it now.
THE DOCTOR: It's not a good time to be up talking.
MIKE YATES: Why?
THE DOCTOR: Because I have to concentrate all night, hypnotising them, each of them in turn. I have to pacify the beasts.

MIKE YATES: (narrating) And that was the last thing he said to me on my first night in Nest Cottage. Next morning dawned bright and early. Downstairs, Mrs Wibbsey thumped tea and toast down in front of me. Bang went a plate of bacon and sausages. Thud went the Times on the cloth before me. I thanked her, and smiled, as the front door opened and in came the Doctor, fresh from a morning walk with Captain.

(Kettle whistling. Utensils clinking.)
THE DOCTOR: Breakfast smells appetising, Mrs Wibbsey. How do you feel about running away with me, and seeing all the marvels of the Universe, hmm?
MRS WIBBSEY: Go and boil your head.
THE DOCTOR: Wonderful woman. Good morning, Mike.
MIKE YATES: I'm not putting up with any more prevarications. I demand a few explanations. Sit here and...
THE DOCTOR: Ooh! Marmalade and bacon in a sandwich squashed together, just so...
MIKE YATES: Doctor!
THE DOCTOR: I'll try to explain what's going on.
MIKE YATES: Are you sure you're all right? You look exhausted.
THE DOCTOR: I rarely sleep at the best of times but I haven't grabbed forty winks for weeks, I can't.
MIKE YATES: Why the devil not?
THE DOCTOR: I have to keep alert - you saw what happens when my concentration slips.
MIKE YATES: The animals?
THE DOCTOR: Mm. They come back to life. Yes.
MIKE YATES: I suppose this whole affair is completely improbable?
THE DOCTOR: Oh yes. Utterly.
MIKE YATES: Well then, I suggest you get on with it. Tell me, Doctor.
THE DOCTOR: Very well.

MIKE YATES: (narrating) And so he did. Through the course of that short Winter's day, the Doctor related to me a startling tale. A bizarre adventure, which I discovered as the daylight started to rapidly fade around us, wasn't over yet, not by any means.

THE DOCTOR: There's something rather horrible about fighting monsters who aren't even alive. You can't hear them breathing, because they don't breathe. And they can sneak up on you easy as anything, because their footsteps are soft and muffled. Their insides rustle with stuffing and sawdust, and so you have to listen very, very carefully in the night to hear them approach. They mostly come out at night. That's when stuffed animals go hunting. Their victims rarely hear them until it's too late. There's a strange smell, perhaps formaldehyde, a whiff of mothballs, an aroma of spoiled leather or musty fur. Being dead doesn't deter these beasties from trotting and traipsing about in the night, and some of them are quite dangerous, you know. Oh, yes, that snow leopard in the study, heh, he'd have your head off as soon as look at you. The giant hare in the downstairs hall could give you a nasty thumping, if he was so inclined. I first became aware of these nocturnal misdeeds a few short weeks ago. I was on a little break here in the peaceful countryside, and I happened upon a local paper's garbled report of the death of a Cabinet minister. He'd been trampled to death in his own bed, the terrible imprint of a hoof upon his forehead. A hoof-print belonging to an alpine ibex, Mike.
MIKE YATES: Not a goat one normally associates with Sussex.
THE DOCTOR: Quite. And not something one would expect to be attacked by in the middle of the night in one's own bed. Similarly, the following weekend, a top secret Governmental think-tank cocktail party was broken up by the rampaging of a bull elephant. Several influential figures from Whitehall were flattened that day, before the military destroyed the beast, finding nothing but wood shavings inside the elephant. You look surprised, Mike. In the past, you would have been well informed of these strange incidents. They're odd enough for UNIT to have been called to the scene. Perhaps we would have been standing there together, you and

I and the Brigadier, in the wreckage of the cocktail party, examining the blasted remains of the elephant. What theories would we have cooked up, eh? Perhaps we'd have had the whole affair stitched up by now. Well, this is a different era, and reading about these peculiar occurrences .. do you know, I even felt a twinge of nostalgia. Me. (laughs) Remember how many times I railed against you lot for dragging me into the affairs of human beings? How many mysteries I looked into under sufferance, just for you.
MIKE YATES: I do indeed, Doctor.
THE DOCTOR: And so I kept my ear to the ground. I listened for the patter of little hooves, the thumping of boneless feet upon the ground, and sure enough, there were other deaths, other strange sightings. An elderly nuclear arms expert fell into a python's embrace as she took her evening bath. Strangled and squeezed to a horrible death she was, and then ingested. Who can be controlling these monsters, as somebody evidently is? Stuffed creatures don't go round of their own volition wiping out influential figures. No. Someone is using these hollow beasts for their own wicked ends. Where do stuffed animals come from? I believe they're a little out of fashion and favour these days, these more enlightened days of your human Twenty-First Century, hmm? Perhaps it seems barbaric to have these corpses posturing about the place, prancing on plinths, boggling their dead glassy eyes at spectators. Once upon a time, stately homes and museums were teeming with the frozen musty things. Museums! Of course, that was it. I ran a quick scan on an area some twenty miles in diameter, within which the strange attacks had taken place. How many public and private might still have examples of the taxidermist's art on show? Doing a little poking around and asking a few questions here and there, I learned that in this age of computer-animated displays and interactive animatronic models, museums are increasingly ridding themselves of their stuffed animals, even the rare and extinct ones. Just imagine. All creatures great and small, preserved beyond their natural deaths and given a home, suddenly unwanted, suddenly chucked out, suddenly no-one cares. Surely this couldn't be why they had gone on the rampage? Surely this couldn't be some form of bestial revenge?
MIKE YATES: It seems ridiculous. I mean, how could a lot of moth-eaten relics suddenly jerk and twitch into life?
THE DOCTOR: I knew you'd say that. Well, listen. They're all quite dead, Mike. All of them. Their animal souls have fled, their bones have been filleted, their flesh has been melted away from their furry hides, and their brains have been scooped like cake mix out of a bowl. But what animates them, eh? What fills their empty hearts and minds with such devastating hatred? I was very keen to find out. My search took me on a round of local stately homes and rather threadbare collections, where the animals looked on the whole wan and hopeless. I saw nothing that seemed very threatening, nothing that could give you a nasty nibbling in the night. Until of course I became aware of the activities of Mr Noggins. Ah, the sly and clever Mr Noggins. An unassuming little man, a rather private fellow, to whom taxidermy is a passion. He has a flair and a feeling for it. A rare talent. With just a few delicate touches he can restore apparent life to these mothy cadavers. Their glass eyes swivel in supplication, and the dead seem to bend one knee in honour of this deft and clever man. Mr Noggins burns with fury at the knowledge that the animals are being thrown out of the museums. Skips and bins stand at the back of the buildings. I've seen this for myself, and it does seem rather a shame to see legs sticking out rigidly from a heap of abandoned bodies, to see a proud lion's head poking majestically from the tip. I soon became aware of these back street menageries. I staked them out. I went to see who came to collect them up. I became aware of the huge steaming, shunting lorries belonging to the rubbish men who came by every now and then to collect up the dead. They took them away at night, lovingly disinterring them from their resting places in the cold, dark alleys. Percy Noggins' men dealt with the creatures delicately, solicitously, and they took them away. But where to? I had to know. One particular night, not too long ago, I stayed after hours at the back of a rather run-down museum in the town nearest to here. The place was in the process of wholesale refurbishment, and so the animals were being dragged out to the back of the buildings. I watched them being removed from the pedestals where they had stood gathering dust for so many years. A giant black bear took three men to haul him away. I asked a few questions, and could learn nothing about where these relics were to be stored. One young woman just shrugged at me when I asked. "The rubbish men take them away," she said. "Maybe they're burnt." "Burnt?" I cried. "But look at that tiger." For just at that moment, the caretakers were pulling a great golden cat across the parquet floor towards the emergency exit. "Would they really burn a tiger? Even a stuffed one? By whose hand, whose immortal eye?" But she just looked at me blankly.

MIKE YATES: I suppose you told her William Blake was a personal friend of yours?
THE DOCTOR: She wasn't in the mood for idle chit-chat. Glumly I had a terrible pot of tea and a damp Garibaldi in the cafeteria at the rear of the museum. I bided my precious time till the place closed down. I hovered and skulked in the alleyway. What was I doing? But my instincts were aroused, my interest was piqued, and sure enough my suspicions were rewarded. At eight o'clock that evening, when the streets were deserted in that benighted part of town, the lorry pulled up, and out came Mr Noggins and his men. Mr Noggins had a clipboard. He waved it around officiously as his silent men set to work. They yanked at the limbs sticking out of the skips, out came the tiger and the great black bear. Mr Noggins carefully wrote down the things that his men took and stowed away in their vehicle. Owls and albatrosses, an outraged hyena, bruised-looking seals, heads cocked with hurt feelings, all of them were carried off into the belly of the lorry, and Mr Noggins ticked them off on his sheet with satisfaction. I watched from the shadows as the rubbish men finished up their work in a matter of minutes, leaving the skips empty but for plasterboard and drinks cans. And when they were all aboard and revving their engine, I hopped lightly onto the tailgate of the lorry. I can be a very nimble Doctor when I like, Mike. I was a stowaway on a lorry full of corpses. And as we steamed off through the city streets, the bodies seemed to rustle and murmur all around me in anticipation. Their fur bristled, their black eyes shone. The journey seemed to last forever. We arrived at an industrial estate on the edge of town. Factories pumped strange pink and purple clouds into the glittering sky. Weirdly empty, that place, as if the factories themselves were automated, and running under their own steam without need of human beings to work there. Soon we arrived at the most obscure set of buildings in that hinterland of gleaming modernity. This was Mr Noggins's own factory. I took a deep breath as the lorry passed through the gates and was admitted into the well-fortified place.There was a whiff of formaldehyde again, all the vinegary chemicals that are used to preserve the flesh and organs of the dead, and something else. A touch of sulphur in the air. A great gout of flame rose up from the chimney dominating Mr Noggins's factory, and all the animal eyes around me glinted brilliantly, as if excited by the sight. Now usually, as you know, I am not averse to marching up to the man in charge and announcing my presence straight away. That evening, I was more keen to see what Noggins's men got up to undisturbed. I hopped down from the truck and stole into the shadows, and I watched Noggins busy with his clipboard again, looking very pleased with himself as the men tramped down the tailgate with his new acquisitions. Pelicans, aardvarks, chimpanzees, the bear, the tiger, all were borne into the factory from which weird churning sounds could be heard, I realised. The machinery within was turning at full tilt through the night. Gnashing, crashing noises, pounding, thumping, as if once inside, the beasts were being plumped up like old pillows, as if they were being shaken and bullied back into life. I had to see inside. I had to see what was going on. Before I knew it, they had taken the last of their haul inside the place, and the great doors clanged. Suddenly I was alone by the bins, listening to the thrumming noises from within. I took a long walk around the perimeter of the place. From outside, it seemed like a very ordinary factory. Perhaps a little run down, compared to its neighbours. There was nothing to tell me what was manufactured within, just that tall cylindrical tower with its bursts of greenish flame. An eternal flame, perhaps, deep within the hellish place, bestowing the essential spark of life back upon the dead. You think I'm being macabre and sentimental, Mike.
MIKE YATES: You know, Doctor, if anyone else was telling me this, I'd swear he was making it up.
THE DOCTOR: Ah. But of course you believe me, don't you? Round about midnight, I witnessed something very disturbing occurring at a side entrance of the place. Some of Noggins's men were manhandling another beast. But this wasn't some rigid specimen like the others. This creature writhed and bucked in their arms. They were laughing and grunting as they struggled to guide it to the exit. It was a wild boar, tusks gleaming ivory in the night. As it broke free and ran berserk round the yard, the men laughed. It trembled and staggered like something newborn, something unsure. They opened the gates for it, still jeering, and set it free into the dark world beyond. The great pig paused on the threshold, uncertain where to go. Then it seemed to sense something. Its eyes blazed bright red, murderously. Its hunched back stood almost as tall as Mr Noggins himself. They were creating monsters in there, Mike. Somehow, they were reanimating these creatures and filling them with hate, and then they were turning them back out into the human world. I watched them set others free. The rubbish men brought out a dazed-looking gorilla, and a snaggle-toothed crocodile. All were escorted from the premises, all looked amazed to be alive again, and all departed into the night, intent upon some horrible mission. Of course, as I went hunting round these factory buildings poking

my nose into their business, it didn't take long before I was caught. Well, I waved my UNIT pass around, you'll be glad to hear, Mike, and that impressed the guards only for a little while. I still haven't updated the photograph, so they thought I was some sort of imposter, which infuriated me. So we ended up by having a bit of a row, which fetched up in a brief tussle. Of course, I managed to get away, and there was a chase around the buildings with my scarf ends trailing about all over the place and these guards haring after me. Good fun, but as you can guess, I really wanted them to catch up and take me prisoner, because that's the only way to get yourself inside the secret base, isn't it, every time? It's quicker than digging a tunnel, isn't it? Anyway, I let them capture me, and there was a bit of a hasty interrogation. "Yes, yes," I told them, "I'm an industrial spy, and what of it?" Really, they were very stupid interrogators, the very worst sort, taking everything I said so very literally. "I'm here to steal the recipe for the very best stuffing in the world," I told them, "and I want to find the deftest method for stitching up cadavers. What's the best twine to be had? Catgut? Violin strings?" They weren't listening to me, and they shoved me into a cell with a very inferior lock while they decided what to do with me. They were thugs really, obviously hired to keep secret the dirty work that went on inside that factory. How did Mary Shelley refer to Frankenstein's laboratory, mm? The workshop of filthy creation. And that factory reeked inside, Mike, it stank of creatures long-dead, of mould, and of evil intentions. When I stopped banging on the door and listened for a moment or two, I could hear all kinds of peculiar noises on the factory floor above the cellar where they had thrown me - strange footsteps, bellows and roars, mewings and whinnies like some hellish zoo. As I say, the lock was very inferior, and though my sonic screwdriver was of no help with such a rusted archaic thing, I made short work of it with a handy paper clip. Outside, I found no guards - very slack. What kind of evil headquarters was this, anyway? Perhaps they were all involved in the work upstairs. I was just creeping about carefully, so very carefully, when I was set upon by something that came blundering out of nowhere. I cried out in shock as I was knocked hard against the cellar's brick wall. My arms clasped instinctively around my assailant, and the creature was thrashing and quivering and making the most horrible hullabaloo. In the meagre light, I saw that its eyes were wide open and black, cold pools of terror, and its mouth was open in a rictus. A baboon. The corridor rang with the chattering noise of simian panic. "There, there, shh," I soothed as the creature clutched and ripped at my coat and scarf. When I took hold of its arms, I felt not the warmth of natural flesh, but something that crackled. These weren't sinews and veins pulsing with life, but something lifelessly wadded about a metal skeleton. Those fingers and claws as they clutched at me were senseless, uncoordinated things, though no less deadly for that. The creature gibbered in my face, and I tried desperately to throw it off. At the same time, my hearts went out to it. There was some vestigial intelligence there, some animal spirit lingering inside the hijacked shell. I could feel its pain and confusion leaking out of its hide. I locked eyes with it. It stared into my face with envy and terror, but for a second, it was still. I had been knocked clear off my feet, and the baboon was frozen as it stared down into my eyes. "There, there, old chap. Calm down, don't panic. There. Shh." It wasn't immune to mesmerism - indeed, its workings were so tragically simplified that it was easy to draw it under my spell. "What happened to you, eh? How did the nasty men bring you back from the so very, very dead?" For a moment I almost believed the baboon was about to answer me. Then a shout rang out, and a shot from one of the guards approaching us at great speed down the brick corridor. The baboon shrieked with fear and slashed at me, bounding away leaving me quite winded. It tore off into the darkness pursued by the majority of the guards, leaving their leader to gurn down at helpless old me, waving a very brave pistol in my face. "Take me to Percy Noggins," I commanded him, supine and bleeding as I was. "Haven't I been hinting strongly enough?" Very little sense of humour, guards like him. It's the same the whole universe over. Percy Noggins turned out to be a very different kettle of corpses. A rotund figure sporting a marmalade-coloured toupee and a leather waistcoat. As he sat behind a desk strewn with incomprehensible paperwork and samples of fur fabric and feathers, I sat down heavily opposite him and by an inadvertent way of greeting, sneezed loudly. That got his attention all right. He looked up at me from under that orange wig and blinked owlishly. I grinned. "Mr Noggins, you look like Odin sorting out a disguise for yourself, some kind of feathered cloak to wear in order to pay the Earth a visit." He raised his pale eyebrows and smiled back at me, rather shyly. He nodded at the brutal guard.

PERCY NOGGINS: That's all right, Nigel. I'll take it from here.
THE DOCTOR: Nigel? (laughs)

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) The guard went out and I looked around the room.

THE DOCTOR: Oh, padded walls. How wonderful. Very good for blocking out all of that terrible noise out there, all of that industrial hullabaloo.
PERCY NOGGINS: I can't stand the noise. Can't bear it.
THE DOCTOR: It's the baboons you ought to watch out for, you know. Very excitable they are. One of them had rather a nasty go at me, you know.
PERCY NOGGINS: Yes, I'm very sorry about that, erm...
THE DOCTOR: Doctor. I am the Doctor.
PERCY NOGGINS: I see.
THE DOCTOR: You seem rather nervous, Mr Noggins.
PERCY NOGGINS: Do I?
THE DOCTOR: You're not doing anything wrong here, are you, in this factory of yours?
PERCY NOGGINS: No, we
THE DOCTOR: You seem a very reasonable sort of man to me, Mr Noggins. A very decent sort.
PERCY NOGGINS: Thank you.
THE DOCTOR: What are you playing at, man?
PERCY NOGGINS: What?
THE DOCTOR: This work you're doing here. It has got to stop.
PERCY NOGGINS: What we do here, this is just a salvage operation.
THE DOCTOR: Poppycock!
PERCY NOGGINS: Well, that's what I set out to do. Simply rescuing the beasts, refurbishing them. Some of them, you know, have been shockingly treated over the years, forgotten about, but they need care and attention. They need to be...
THE DOCTOR: But why are they rampaging about, Noggins, that's the question, isn't it? Why are they going berserk?
PERCY NOGGINS: They aren't.
THE DOCTOR: Don't be tiresome, man. That's why you've got this room soundproofed, muffled and woolly like your own thinking, so you can't hear the noises out there.
PERCY NOGGINS: What noises?
THE DOCTOR: You don't *want* to hear them, do you? The tapping of their hooves, the gnashing of their yellow teeth.
PERCY NOGGINS: No! They can't come back to life. That's ridiculous.
THE DOCTOR: Oh but they can, Mr Noggins, you can't deny it, all these murders committed by creatures from this very factory.
PERCY NOGGINS: These animals, they are long dead. There's nothing inside them but wool and dust and ... kapok wadding. Some of them are over a hundred years old.
THE DOCTOR: They live, Mr Noggins.
PERCY NOGGINS: I never ... set out to do this. It wasn't the idea at all.
THE DOCTOR: Wasn't it?
PERCY NOGGINS: Why should *you* care about what's going on here?
THE DOCTOR: I care a great deal, Mr Noggins, about a great many things, and I worry about people being coerced into doing things they don't want to, especially wicked things, and I think that's what's been happening here, isn't it?
PERCY NOGGINS: No. Leave me alone. Nigel! Nigel!
THE DOCTOR: Soundproofed office, Mr Noggins. Perhaps I'd better let myself out.
PERCY NOGGINS: Leave me! Let us get on with our...
THE DOCTOR: With your what? Your valuable work? What are you up to, you foolish man? What is controlling you?
PERCY NOGGINS: Get out. Get out!
(*This is where part one ended on the radio.)*

DOCTOR WHO: Did I feel at all guilty for leaving the little man slumped like that in his padded office? He looked so defeated and pathetic. I had no time to dwell on fripperies such as feelings, Mike, as I had to get myself out of that place pretty sharpish, otherwise they'd lock me up again somewhere more secure this time, and I had work to do, vital work, investigative work. You know me, Mike, subtle and blithe as a shadow when I want to be. (laughs) Of course, it was easy work for me to slip aboard one of their lorries and sneak back out of that dreadful industrial wasteland.

(*This is where part two started on the radio.)*
THE DOCTOR: All the way back to civilisation my head was buzzing. What kind of discarnate being might deliberately possess the dead forms of these creatures? What kind of twilight spirit might be so desperate to find corporeal form once more? Well, I had all sorts of ideas about that, ideas jostling about, vying for attention. But at hearts, I am of course a scientist. What I needed most was evidence. I required a specimen. I decided I must get my hands on one of those weird still-living beasties. I needed to capture it somehow and subdue it. And then, I would pry inside its innermost layers and so discover what exactly made it tick. I spent a very disconsolate evening back here at the Nest. At that point I was still catering for myself. Mrs Wibbsey hadn't yet joined the household crew, and I made a gloomy supper of a tin of spam and some ginger biscuits topped off with a schooner of some rather sticky sherry. I poured over the local and national papers, clipping any articles to do with animals. The Minister for Transport visiting an elderly aunt had been mauled by wild dogs while in the corner shop buying almond slices for tea. I sat late into the night in the sitting-room of my cottage pondering on how to get my hands on a specimen of one of these demonically-possessed fauna. As it turned out, I didn't have to look very far. The fire crackled right down to the last hot embers and the night came creeping in around me, stealing under the doors and the ill-fitting windows of this ancient place. And with the night came the night beasts. I held very still. I was alert at the merest scrape of a claw on a cold window pane, the tiniest shriek of the frame as something levered it open. I was being visited. It was past three AM. I didn't even turn. I sat tensely expectant, listening for the tread of paws or claws, and as I said before, there was no hoarse breathing, no obvious signs of life. This was how the dead came stealing in - pad, pad, pad on stuffing-filled limbs, the true stuff of nightmares, Mike. Small enough to clamber through my window, large enough to cause a heavy thump on the carpet when it landed in my room. I turned very slowly to see. These stiff old joints of mine. I was dreading they would crack and give away the fact that I was awake. It was a badger. A snuffling ursine brute, piebald and fanged, nudging its stealthy way towards me, undoubtedly with the idea of doing me in. It knew where I had been that day, for I still had the charnel-house reek of that factory in my clothes. The badger flexed its talons and its black eyes glittered with hatred. In a flash I was up on my feet, whirling around with The Times and all the other papers, flinging them over the beast as it prepared to spring. I leapt backwards, and ah ha! The poker was glowing orange, smouldering in the remains of the fire. I grabbed it, and brandished it furiously as the beast ripped its way through the Colour Supplements. It snarled at me, and came lumbering round the armchair, thumping its limbs on the rucked-up carpet. I waved my burning poker in its face, but the creature seemed to have lost its natural instincts. It outfaced the heat bravely, and came running at me on clattering claws. I had no choice. I stabbed it hard through the muscular chest with my makeshift weapon, and winced at the flying sparks and the horrid smell of burning fur. Now the creature howled, a ghastly, unearthly noise. I pressed my advantage, withdrawing and stabbing again, urging the flames to catch. My assailant was nothing if not flammable, surely? It was about to get worse. The badger twisted and thrashed, its glass eyes gleamed with torpid dismay. Acrid smoke started to fill the air, and then there came a crash from the scullery kitchen. More of the creatures. The badger had not come alone. With strength borne of desperation, I hoisted up the weakened form of my enemy, and hauled him over to the coals. The kitchen was a scene of chaos. The windows had been smashed, and three more beasts were clattering about. Crockery had been pushed off the draining-board, smashing on the stone tiles, and here they were. The invaders. Small, but no less deadly and determined for that. Some awful rat thing grabbing at my dressing-gown cord, a snuffling leathery mole attempting to sink its fangs into my ankle, an amphibian monstrosity flinging itself off the Welsh dresser, and everywhere, that nasty smell of chemical preservatives. I fought that night, Mike. I fought for my life. You know how I like to find a better way, a more peaceful solution. But these animals were dead shells, brimming with endless energy. I knew they would go on attacking me all night with their tiny savage claws and teeth. Diving onto the floor, I flung open the cupboard under the sink. I rummaged amongst the cleaning supplies which I had up to that point never even looked at. I improvised a rather nifty flame-thrower, using some kind of aerosol spray and a book of Cook's Matches. Then I had the bleach out, and I dashed it at the wicked little monsters. That made them squeal. And then during a lull in all the action it struck me. I was under attack, by the cast of a crazed version of the Wind In The Willows. As the night air came whirling in through the broken kitchen windows, freezing the cottage right through, the battle redoubled, and I turned into some kind of savage being, protecting home and hearth from the wild beasts. Really Mike, you would hardly recognise me. At last, it was

over. I had defeated them, by fair means or foul. Whatever malign intelligence had animated these cadavers fled all of a sudden it seemed, and the damaged beings dropped where they stood, quite lifeless. And battered, bruised, and wearily triumphant, I stood surveying the wreckage of my home from home. By then dawn was coming up. Luckily, no-one in the village had noticed the small war in my cottage. It's one of those places where the locals let you keep yourself to yourself, which is rather a relief in my line of work. With the dawn came a chance to properly examine the lifeless bodies of my assailants. I hoiked the badger's skull from the heap of warm embers, and gave it a cautious once-over. Scraps of matted fur dropped away, and the black marbles of its eyes rolled out to cross the hearth. I thought I'd glimpsed something odd poking out of one of the sockets. Some sort of scrolled paper. A miracle it hadn't burned. I cleared the dining-room table with one sweep of my arm and set up a makeshift workbench. I brought the four tattered pathetic corpses to the table. Really in the fresh light of day, I felt almost guilty for having battered them into smithereens, but I had to remind myself in the dead of night they had been possessed of a weird kind of demonic power. Whatever their size, they had been quite capable of dragging me down and tearing me to shreds. I set to work, grimly. I opened up their skulls, working calmly and patiently like a watch-mender. Their little bones seemed to tremble beneath my fingers. I opened their skulls and what did I find? Four little nests of paper. Pencil shavings was my first thought when I saw those curled and scrolling masses of paper. These were intricate, almost beautiful, origami brains. But who would go to all that trouble, of creating brains like these for the skulls of dead creatures? When I opened the badger's skull, I believed I had my answer. Though he had been flung on the fire, his brain was the least damaged. It was larger, and more complicated, and it still had a number of inhabitants.

MIKE YATES: Inhabitants? In the wretched creature's skull?
THE DOCTOR: It came as a shock to me too. I opened up the badger's brain using very tiny brain scissors. The pulpy paper cracked apart. It was like breaking the seal on a bundle of letters that had been locked away for centuries. Inside were huddled the desiccated forms of insects, dozens of them, tiny things, curled about each other. I peered closer. Some still lived, feebly twitching antennae as they scrambled about the papery walkways and levels of their home. They dragged their dying thoraxes, disorientated, doomed. I had destroyed a whole insect hive, one housed inside the brain of my attacker. They weren't flies or ants or wasps. They were hornets. As I watched, perhaps a dozen feebly made their escape, ascending from their hideaway and making their way through the gloomy light of my study for the broken windows. I was astonished. I was prepared to give Percy Noggins another chance. I didn't believe that he truly was the wicked mastermind behind this whole business of the murderous cadavers. He and his workforce must have been in thrall to something else. We met in the same cafeteria, in a museum where I had first observed his activities. The museum was now quite devoid of stuffed animals. Workmen were setting up new interactive displays and exhibits that would undoubtedly be more hygienic and less dusty that a load of dead bodies with glass eyes. But the Natural History Museum had definitely lost some of its charm. Percy Noggins looked thoroughly depressed by the place.

THE DOCTOR: Tell me, when you've restored them to their former glory, where do they go?
PERCY NOGGINS: Private collectors. Oh, you'd be surprised how many enthusiasts there are for preserved beasts, especially the rarer sorts.
THE DOCTOR: So you make a nice profit, do you?
PERCY NOGGINS: I do this for love, Doctor, for love of the creatures themselves.
THE DOCTOR: I'm sorry, Mr Noggins, I...
PERCY NOGGINS: It's the human race that's on the rampage, Doctor. It is we who are going berserk. We are destroying species after species and we hardly ever look back. We just burn up the surface of the planet, turning it to ashes and molten slag.
THE DOCTOR: So you see it as your job to make sure that a record is kept?
PERCY NOGGINS: Once the stuffed animals were trophies for hunters. The collecting of them caused extinctions but now I see my beasts as reminders. Our conscience speaking perhaps, telling us what we have lost.
THE DOCTOR: I was always rather fond of the dodo. I kept one for a while, you know. She used to travel with me. Very argumentative, dodos.
PERCY NOGGINS: You're crackers.
THE DOCTOR: Marvellous, isn't it? I find it's the only way to be - now, drink up your

peppermint tea, Percy Noggins, we're going back to your factory, together.
PERCY NOGGINS: You can't go back there!
THE DOCTOR: Why not?
PERCY NOGGINS: They'll kill you! I've heard them whispering, humming, making plans. They hate you!
THE DOCTOR: Who, Percy? Who are you talking about?
PERCY NOGGINS: I can't say. I'm sorry, Doctor.
THE DOCTOR: They can't control your thoughts.
PERCY NOGGINS: They can get inside. They can crawl into my mind.
THE DOCTOR: Resist them. The human mind is...
PERCY NOGGINS: ... Is vulnerable, Doctor! The human mind is riddled with so many tender spots. My head is like a sieve! Have you heard that expression before?
THE DOCTOR: I think I invented it.
PERCY NOGGINS: They come and go into my thoughts! They look out through my eyes. I ... Doctor...
THE DOCTOR: What is it?
PERCY NOGGINS: They are watching us now. They know I am talking to you. They think I am betraying them.
THE DOCTOR: Who, Noggins? Whom are you talking about?
PERCY NOGGINS: You have seen them. They came for you in the night, and you fought them off. Oh, they are furious with you, Doctor. They are seething. Many, many more will come for you.
THE DOCTOR: Let them come. Ha! I've fought much worse things.
PERCY NOGGINS: Are you sure?
THE DOCTOR: You must take me back with you, back to the factory, back to your workshop, now.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) We went in Percy's car. I must admit to a slight shiver of unease as we cut through the tea-time traffic and headed for the industrial outskirts of that town.. Even I didn't truly know what we were facing, or indeed whether Noggins was trustworthy. All I knew was that the hornets I had witnessed crawling from the papery brain of the smouldering badger were no ordinary insects. They were tiny, for one thing. They were like no hornets I had ever seen before. What had I smoked out of the badger's head? What dreadful foes had I brought upon me? At the factory gates, the rubbish men on guard waved us in. As Percy's passenger, I attracted a few strange looks as I waved enthusiastically back. We arrived as several of the lorries were leaving, off to do their work as night settled down over the land. I imagined them building an army of such creatures, a rabid plague of possessed beasts.

(In a car.)
THE DOCTOR: Act natural, Noggins. You look too nervous. Your men will realise that something is up.
PERCY NOGGINS: I should never have brought you back here. It's too dangerous, for all of us.
THE DOCTOR: Never mind that now.
PERCY NOGGINS: What can you do? It's too late.
THE DOCTOR: I'll improvise, like I always do - brilliantly. (Chuckles.)
PERCY NOGGINS: You can't talk to them.
THE DOCTOR: I shall certainly try.
PERCY NOGGINS: They won't listen to you. To them human beings are ... they're no more than the empty cadavers of the animals. We are just walking talking vehicles for them.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) I mulled over Percy's words as we hurried down the spartan passageways to his office. I had a horrible feeling that I had caught his meaning only too accurately. The hornets could take possession of human minds as easily as they could the hollow skulls of the creatures I had encountered. But how? Once inside his office, Percy began shaking like a leaf.

THE DOCTOR: Don't you keep a tot of brandy in here to steady your nerves?
PERCY NOGGINS: I can't abide liquor.
THE DOCTOR: Oh, pity.

PERCY NOGGINS: They can get into anywhere through the ventilation ducts.
THE DOCTOR: Tell me, Percy. Why are they so small? The hornets I've seen before were much larger.
PERCY NOGGINS: It makes them easier to infiltrate us. They can alter their size at will.
THE DOCTOR: How terribly interesting. That doesn't sound like a normal land-dwelling insect.
PERCY NOGGINS: These insects have abilities like you wouldn't believe, Doctor.
THE DOCTOR: I am capable of making great leaps of faith when it comes to the unknown. And who is to say there can't be a wholly new breed of insects upon the Earth, hmm? One possessed of strange powers that we can only guess at.
PERCY NOGGINS: You sound so ... calm about it all.
THE DOCTOR: There's no use panicking, is there? Where does that get you?
(Buzzing starts.)
PERCY NOGGINS: I can't breathe!
THE DOCTOR: Close the vents. Turn off the air conditioning.
PERCY NOGGINS: What?
THE DOCTOR: Do it. Seal the room.
(Multiple buzzing.)
PERCY NOGGINS: Oh no!
THE DOCTOR: Can you hear that?
PERCY NOGGINS: Of course I can.
THE DOCTOR: Do they often make that noise? Do you let them fly about freely in the factory?
PERCY NOGGINS: I have no control.
THE DOCTOR: I thought so.
PERCY NOGGINS: They come and go as they please.
THE DOCTOR: Perhaps they know I'm here.
PERCY NOGGINS: They do. I'm sure they do.
THE DOCTOR: I'll be fascinated to meet them. I've been known to get on terribly well with insect species, you know. With one or two exceptions of course, like those dreadful Wirrn, or the Zarbi, but decent types like the Wrath Warriors turned out to be in the end all...
PERCY NOGGINS: I've locked myself in here with a madman.
THE DOCTOR: What?
PERCY NOGGINS: For some reason I trusted you, I believed you. I thought you might be able to help.
THE DOCTOR: Then your instincts were right.
PERCY NOGGINS: But you're crazy! Babbling like ... like...
THE DOCTOR: Shh! They're getting closer. Tell me, Percy, how do you communicate with them?
PERCY NOGGINS: I ... I...
THE DOCTOR: Oh, come on, man. Snap out of it.
PERCY NOGGINS: I have seen them swarm over one of my men. Someone who had let us down. They stung him thousands of times. He died in the most horrible agony.
THE DOCTOR: Mm. There are worse things than pain.
PERCY NOGGINS: Look, who are you anyway?
THE DOCTOR: Answer my question. How do you speak with your insect masters, hmm?

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) I looked at Percy Noggins. I looked him straight in the eye. I saw something that I hadn't noticed before. His eyes were a bright glassy black, like the badger's eyes. Like the eyes of all the beasts I had seen setting out from this place. Within that glass, I could see insect eyes, faceted like dark jewels, staring straight back at me through the eyes of Percy Noggins. I could see their pointy little limbs distorted in the fisheye lenses. They swarmed and clattered around the inside of the man's head. Were they really inside his skull? Had they nibbled away his brain with their tiny mandibles? I wasn't sure what I was studying as I took Percy's face between my hands. I frowned, staring deep into those swarming pits. He was teeming with insects. He was legion.

THE DOCTOR: Percy, listen to me.
(Multiple voices from PERCY NOGGINS are heard - THE SWARM, amid multiple buzzing sounds.)
THE SWARM: We are listening, Doctor.
THE DOCTOR: What is it that you hope to achieve, eh?

THE SWARM: There is so little flesh on an insect body. We are all skeleton. Very little flesh indeed.
THE DOCTOR: What are you talking about?
THE SWARM: Just that we love you animals, you mammals, you reptiles, all of you creatures with lots of flesh to burrow into. Lots of eating on you, lots of warmth inside. The insect world can be rather cold, you see.
THE DOCTOR: Percy, you have to resist them.
THE SWARM: Percy is a good man, Doctor. He is helping us.
THE DOCTOR: I can see that. You must stop.
THE SWARM: How can we stop now? We have our army of beasts to unleash upon the world. We are learning new things every day. We are learning more about the mind of Man.
THE DOCTOR: Leave Mankind alone, I warn you.
THE SWARM: You speak for Mankind?
THE DOCTOR: Occasionally, when he doesn't know what he's getting into, or what nastiness is under his nose. Sometimes I *have* to speak for him, yes.
THE SWARM: But you are not of Mankind. We know about you.
THE DOCTOR: Do you indeed?
THE SWARM: We know such a lot about you already. The Hive will enjoy exploring your mind further, Doctor.
THE DOCTOR: I'm sure it would.
THE SWARM: You are so, so vulnerable to us.
THE DOCTOR: Perhaps.
THE SWARM: We can ... hear your thoughts. Almost taste them.
THE DOCTOR: Yes. They are rather marvellous, aren't they? But they're private, if you don't mind.
THE SWARM: The Swarm can be inside you within a matter of minutes.
THE DOCTOR: Not today, thank you.

THE DOCTOR: I could sense the massive mental power that the creatures possessed. I had underestimated them. They were no ordinary insects. They were...
MIKE YATES: Alien. They were, weren't they?
THE DOCTOR: Suddenly I realised. Of course.

THE DOCTOR: You're not of this Earth, are you?
THE SWARM: We have allowed you a glimpse into the hive mind, and what you have seen will shake you to your core. Do you fear us now?
THE DOCTOR: Er ... (Cough.) Well, I don't do fear, you know. I can never take it completely seriously.
THE SWARM: You will fear us. How about ... this!
(Humming.)
THE SWARM: This is how we will penetrate your mind. This is how we will get inside your thoughts.
THE DOCTOR: No. No, no. You must stop.
THE SWARM: We have been toying with corpses and making use of creatures like Mr Noggins. You are a much more worthy vessel for us. We have waited so long for you to come back into our lives.
THE DOCTOR: No, no, no ... you must not ... I must not ... You shouldn't insult your poor host like that. Poor Percy has done a great deal on your behalf, hmm?
THE SWARM: He is negligible! He is as much use to us as that badger you despatched last night, Doctor.
THE DOCTOR: Percy? Have you heard what they're saying?
PERCY NOGGINS: Doctor! I can hear them. They ... they have ... they...
THE DOCTOR: Resist them, Percy Noggins. Fight for your thoughts. Smoke them out of your brain.
PERCY NOGGINS: How?
THE SWARM: You can't resist us. You have given us everything. You have nothing left to fight us with.
THE DOCTOR: Think of what they've done, Percy. They've taken your whole factory, your workshop. They've taken possession of all the beasts you have rescued. They don't care about them. They'll just cast them off when they've finished with them.

PERCY NOGGINS: I ... I don't know what I was thinking of. Revenge, maybe. Revenge on human beings for treating my friends so badly.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) He thrashed about, knocking furniture and overturning his desk. Some great struggle within the tortured form of a little man was breaking out in violence.

(Multiple buzzing in background.)
THE SWARM: Yes - revenge, Percy. You can still have revenge. We will all take revenge.
THE DOCTOR: Don't let them dictate what you should do. Resist them, Percy. Help me. *I* can stop them. You don't have to give in to them.
PERCY NOGGINS: What ... shall I do?
THE DOCTOR: The animals - they all contain a splinter, a shard of the hive mind, do they not?
PERCY NOGGINS: Yes. All of them are possessed by the hornets.
THE DOCTOR: Then they must be contained. Somehow, we've got to get them all together, lure them somehow. You, Percy Noggins, you are going to be our Pied Piper.
THE SWARM: No need, Doctor. Where you lead, we will follow. Your mind is what we most fervently desire. We know you. We have met you before, a long way from here, in Time.
THE DOCTOR: Really?
THE SWARM: You will never escape us, not now, not now that we know you are here.
THE DOCTOR: That's very interesting. Very interesting indeed, because I was about to ask you all to come home with me.
PERCY NOGGINS: What? Doctor, you can't. It's too dangerous.
THE DOCTOR: I think I know what I can deal with, Percy, and if this lot are focussed on me, then it takes their attention away from the rest of the world.
PERCY NOGGINS: But Doctor, the danger.
THE DOCTOR: Just do it, Percy. Organise it. Recall your men and all your vehicles. You must load up all the animals, each and every one, and bring them all to me, to my home. Bring them all to the Nest.
THE SWARM: Hurry, Percy Noggins, and do as the Doctor tells you. Oh, we have won! He is defeated. We will swarm in his Nest, and he will welcome us there, and his mind, his mind at the centre of the Swarm!
THE DOCTOR: We'll just have to see about that. But come, come! All are welcome at Nest Cottage!

(Ticking of a clock.)
THE DOCTOR: So now you know why the place is stuffed with wonderful examples of the taxidermist's macabre art. I'm sorry, Mike. I've invited you somewhere teeming with terrible dangers.
MIKE YATES: I don't care about that, Doctor. But why? And why did you make Noggins bring them all here?
THE DOCTOR: Force-shield. All over the cottage, extrapolated from the TARDIS's dimensional stabilisers. I had to cannibalise bits of the poor old girl's workings to get it going, but we've got them contained here in the Nest.
MIKE YATES: And the factory?
THE DOCTOR: Empty. The hornet's evacuated when their leader, their Queen, sensed the swarm was on the move.
MIKE YATES: Force-shield?
THE DOCTOR: Yes.
MIKE YATES: How did I get in, then?
THE DOCTOR: Semi-permeable. Has to be, otherwise the milkman would get suspicious.
MIKE YATES: And you've been here for weeks, keeping the hornets mesmerised and docile.
THE DOCTOR: I have to admit, it's been rather tiring.
MIKE YATES: Well, you've got help now. What can I do?
THE DOCTOR: I've been making a few short trips and sidesteps in the TARDIS, leaving and returning in the blink of an eye in order to gather further information about our foes.
(Clock has begun chiming.)
THE DOCTOR: Since that first encounter in the factory, I have fought them again and again through Time.
MIKE YATES: You've been fighting a swarm of these things by yourself?
THE DOCTOR: Mm. I'm running out of ideas. I don't want to sit here for ever, pleasant as this

cottage is. It's late. Another night begins.
(Growling of beasts begins.)
MIKE YATES: Is that them?
THE DOCTOR: Yes.
MIKE YATES: The animals?
THE DOCTOR: They're early tonight. They know I have a guest, they know that I must be planning something.
MIKE YATES: Why don't you burn them, make a great big bonfire?
THE DOCTOR: Steady on, Mike. Besides, the hornets always manage to evacuate the cadaver in time. The beasts are just the vessels for our enemies. And they're fast, they're clever.
MIKE YATES: Your housekeeper, Mrs Wibbsey, where is she?
THE DOCTOR: Locks herself in the attic each night. The animals don't bother her. It's me they want. My mind they want to possess.
(Close growl.)
MIKE YATES: What the devil! It's a wolf!
(Barking of a dog.)
THE DOCTOR: A nasty one. Captain, no. Down, boy, down.
MIKE YATES: Stay back, Doctor.

MIKE YATES: (narrating) It was all I could do to keep the foolish man back from diving in and rescuing that damn dog of his. I dragged him backwards towards the kitchen, where several other hellish birds and beasts were waking from their slumbers and eyeing us greedily.

THE DOCTOR: They've never been as agitated as this before.
MIKE YATES: Doctor, you've dragged me into another of your nightmares. It's happening all over again.
THE DOCTOR: Quick, the cellar. We can make a barricade.

MIKE YATES: (narrating) We ran through the house, shunting furniture in our wake until we gained the safety of the cellar.

(Growls and barking. Cellar door slams. Echoing voices of being inside the cellar.)
THE DOCTOR: Oh Captain, my Captain, you brave, silly dog. I do hope he's all right.
MIKE YATES: So now we're stuck down here.
THE DOCTOR: Mm. Probably wisest.
MIKE YATES: Not had a clear-out in a while, have you, Doctor?
THE DOCTOR: I put some things down here, things I might need.
MIKE YATES: Looks a bit like your lab back at UNIT HQ. Same mix of ultra-modern equipment and dusty old tat. We're just missing Miss Grant or Miss Smith. What's all this gubbins?
THE DOCTOR: This gubbins, Mr Yates, is the dimensional stabiliser from my TARDIS.
MIKE YATES: And where is the TARDIS, by the way?
THE DOCTOR: It isn't here just now.
MIKE YATES: I have a feeling that this tale you spent the whole day spinning isn't over yet, is it, Doctor?
THE DOCTOR: No, not quite, Mike. Look, there's the kettle. Why don't you make us a nice cup of tea?
(Birdlike screech.)
MIKE YATES: What's that?
THE DOCTOR: Vampire bat. Must have been sleeping down here. Quickly.
(Fluttering of its wings.)

(Amid bird fluttering and screeching.)
MIKE YATES: (narrating) I didn't fancy shooting in such a confined space, so I grabbed the closest thing to hand with which to hit out at the leathery, shrieking monstrosity.

THE DOCTOR: Here, let me. You'll get nowhere hitting it with a pair of ballet slippers. Oh, Mike.
MIKE YATES: Ballet slippers?

MIKE YATES: (narrating) It turns out that I had indeed grabbed a pair of pink satin slippers. Now, just what the Doctor was doing with them on top of his dimensional stabiliser I had no idea. But I was rather pleased to see him take up a gleaming garden shovel and batter said vampire bat with it. Then, silence. There were no more stuffed creatures in the cellar.

MIKE YATES: You can promise me that, can't you, Doctor? There'll be no more of them in here tonight.
THE DOCTOR: I believe so, Mike. I think we're safe, for now.
MIKE YATES: Thank goodness. So, the kettle's boiling. It looks rather like an all-night vigil coming up, Doctor.
THE DOCTOR: I used to be fond of all-night vigils. They've lost their novelty recently.
MIKE YATES: I suggest you tell me, more, Doctor, about this whole ghastly business, these short trips you've made in your TARDIS. What about them?
THE DOCTOR: Everywhere I have been in these weeks since I first met the hornets, I have encountered them again and again. Wherever I go in Time, they swarm before my eyes. They will not let me go.
MIKE YATES: Tell me everything.
THE DOCTOR: All right. I'll tell you what came next. It was about a week after Percy Noggins brought his many stuffed beasts to the Nest. I had spent night and after night calming them, mesmerising them, and making them forget their plans to take over the world. And then I realised that if I just slipped away in the TARDIS for a rest, I could be gone and back in the blink of an eye. I could buy myself some time for making plans.
MIKE YATES: Where did you go? Oh - don't tell me. Was it Metebelis Three? Or the anti-matter Universe?
THE DOCTOR: I went to Cromer. Cromer, in July of Nineteen Thirty-Two.
MIKE YATES: Cromer in Norfolk?
THE DOCTOR: Mm.
MIKE YATES: Well, lovely spot, but ... why?
THE DOCTOR: Well, it was something I'd read, Mike. The books upstairs aren't just ornamental, you know. Some of them are rather useful, and something that caught my eye in an almanac of curious happenings.
MIKE YATES: Well, do go on. I can hardly stand the suspense.
THE DOCTOR: (clear throat.) I'll pour the tea, and we'll make ourselves comfortable in this musty old cellar, and then...
MIKE YATES: Yes?
THE DOCTOR: I'll tell you all about the mystery of the dead shoes.
MIKE YATES: Ohh!
THE DOCTOR: Yes.

(Tom Baker's closing Doctor Who theme, composed by Ron Grainer.)

ANNOUNCER: (Tom Baker) Hornets' Nest - The Stuff Of Nightmares, by Paul Magrs, starred Tom Baker and Richard Franklin. Mrs Wibbsey was played by Susan Jameson, and Percy Noggins was played by Daniel Hill. The Script Editor was Michael Stevens. It was Produced and Directed by Kate Thomas, and is published by BBC Audio Books.

Transcribed by David Tait